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NO. 3

ALL-NEW!

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THE OLD WITCH

THE VAULT-KEEPER

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"A MURDERIN' IDOL"
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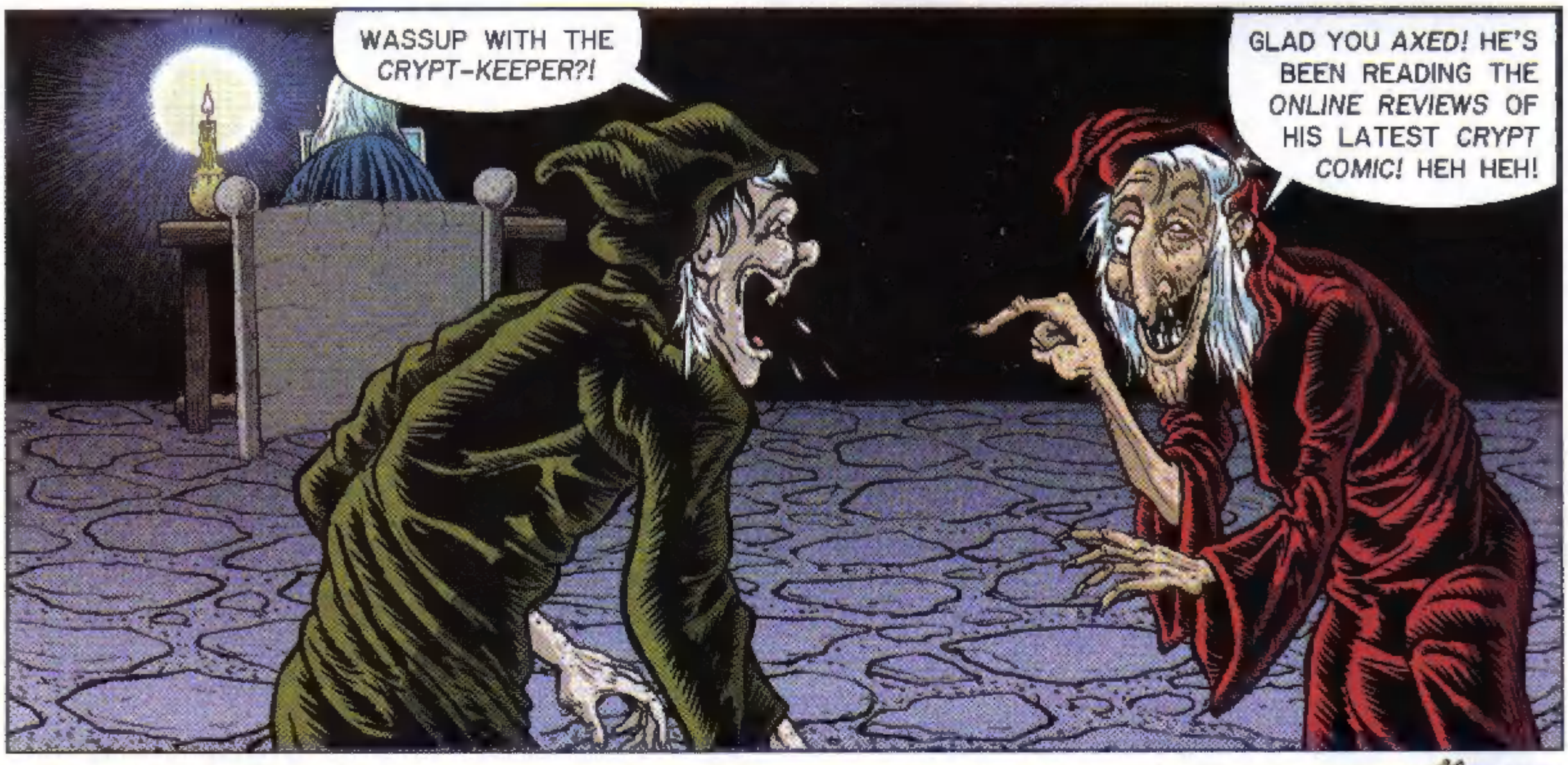

WASSUP WITH THE *CRYPT-KEEPER?!*
GLAD YOU *AXED!* HE'S BEEN READING THE *ONLINE REVIEWS* OF HIS LATEST *CRYPT COMIC!* HEH HEH!

EITHER HE'S SO *SELF-ABSORBED* THAT'S HE'S *GHOULGLED* HIMSELF TO *DEATH* OR THE REVIEWS ARE WAY *SCARIER* THAN HIS STORIES --HE HASN'T BUDGED IN HOURS!
WELL, *OLD WITCH*, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY-- *EC* COME, *EC* GO!
HEY, THAT'LL LOOK *GROOVY* IN MY *VAULT!*

OL' C-K REMINDS ME OF ANOTHER DESPERATELY *NEEDY NINCOMPOOP* NAMED *JAYSAN!* HE TOO WANTED TO BE *LOVED* BY *MILLIONS!* THAT'S WHY JAYSAN HOPED TO BECOME THE *POPSTAR IDOL!* HERE'S A *FRIGHTENING FABLE* FROM MY *WITCH'S CAULDRON* CALLED...
A Murderin' Idol

AT A RATTY TENEMENT FLAT, A WANNABE SUPER-STAR HAS OVERSLEPT...

I'M HERE AT THE FIRST DAY OF TRYOUTS FOR NEXT SEASON'S EDITION OF *POPSTAR IDOL*--

OH, NO! WHY DIDN'T YOU *WAKE* ME UP?! YOU *KNEW* I WANTED TO BE THERE, GLORIA!

--AS YOU CAN SEE, THE CROWD IS *IMMENSE!* MANY HAVE BEEN IN LINE FOR *DAYS* TO GET THEIR CHANCE TO AUDITION FOR THE *HIT SHOW!*

DAMN HER! SHE HAS NO FAITH IN MY TALENT! IF SHE WASN'T PAYING THE RENT, I'D KICK HER TO THE CURB! IF SHE MAKES ME MISS MY CHANCE I'LL KILL HER!

GOOD LORD! LOOK AT THE LINE! THERE MUST BE THOUSANDS OF JERKS TRYING TO GET ON THE SHOW!

HEY! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, KID?
I WANT TO AUDITION FOR POPSTAR IDOL!

YEAH, YOU AND A MILLION OTHERS! THE TRYOUTS ARE CLOSED FOR TODAY! COME BACK TOMORROW!

DEJECTED BUT DETERMINED, THE POTENTIAL POPSTAR WANDERS BACK HOME...
DARN IT! I'M GONNA GET IN LINE LATER TONIGHT TO MAKE SURE I GET IN! I'D SELL MY SOUL TO GET ON THAT SHOW!

PREOCCUPIED WITH HIS THOUGHTS, HE DOESN'T NOTICE A LARGE BOOK BLOCKING HIS PATH AND STUMBLES OVER IT...
OOF!
THUMP

WHAT TH--?! WHERE DID THAT DARN THING COME FROM?

BOOK OF DREAM FULFILLMENT? THIS THING LOOKS ANCIENT AS HELL!

LITTLE REALIZING HOW TRUE HIS STATEMENT IS, HE FLIPS THROUGH THE TOME...
IT'S IN SOME WEIRD LANGUAGE... THOUGH I'M STARTING TO UNDERSTAND IT!

I GUESS IT IS IN ENGLISH AFTER ALL! IT LOOKED FOREIGN AT FIRST, BUT NOW I CAN READ IT! IT'S SOME SORT OF BOOK OF MAGIC SPELLS THAT CAN MAKE ANY WISH COME TRUE!
WELL, I DON'T NEED IT! I HAVE ALL THE RAW TALENT I NEED TO MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE!

HOWEVER, IT COULDN'T HURT TO HAVE A LITTLE HELP, I GUESS!

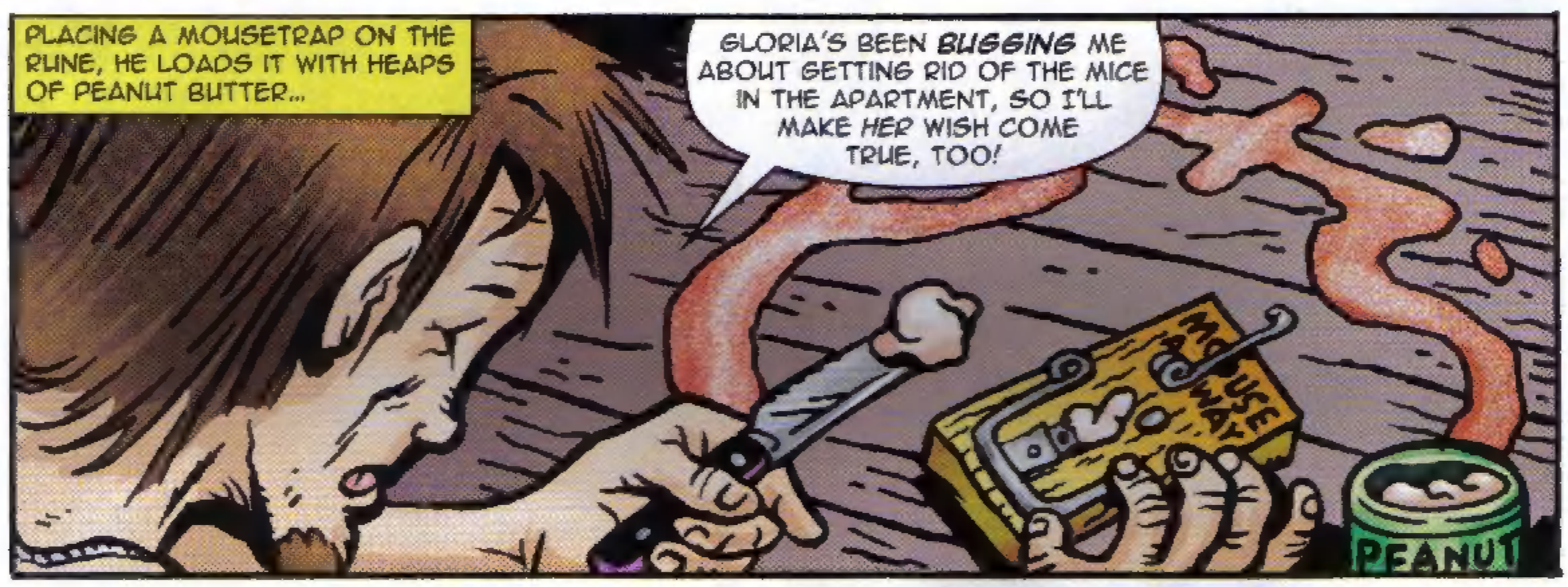
JAYSAN TAKES THE BOOK HOME, AND WHILE GLORIA IS AT WORK, HE PORES THOUGH ITS PRIMORDIAL, YELLOWED PAGES...
ACCORDING TO THIS, ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SCRIBBLE SOME STRANGE DOODLES ON THE FLOOR AND PERFORM SOME SORT OF >GULP< SACRIFICE!

COPYING THE ARCANE FIGURES FROM THE BOOK, HE CONTEMPLATES HIS NEXT STEP...

I'M SUPPOSED TO GIVE A *BLOOD OFFERING* TO SUMMON A *DEMON* TO GRANT MY WISH, B-BUT I CAN'T *KILL* SOMETHING...OR *CAN* I? I'VE *GOT* TO WIN ON *POPSTAR IDOL!*

PLACING A MOUSETRAP ON THE RUNE, HE LOADS IT WITH HEAPS OF PEANUT BUTTER...

GLORIA'S BEEN *BUGGING* ME ABOUT GETTING RID OF THE MICE IN THE APARTMENT, SO I'LL MAKE *HER* WISH COME TRUE, TOO!



HIDING IN THE SHADOWS, JAYSAN DOESN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG...

HA! IT WORKED! NOW WHAT?!

SNAP!

SQUEEE!!!

BEFORE HIS ASTONISHED EYES, THE DEAD MOUSE IS CONSUMED IN FLAMES AND A STRANGE SMOKE RISES WITH AN OFFENSIVE SULFURIC SMELL!

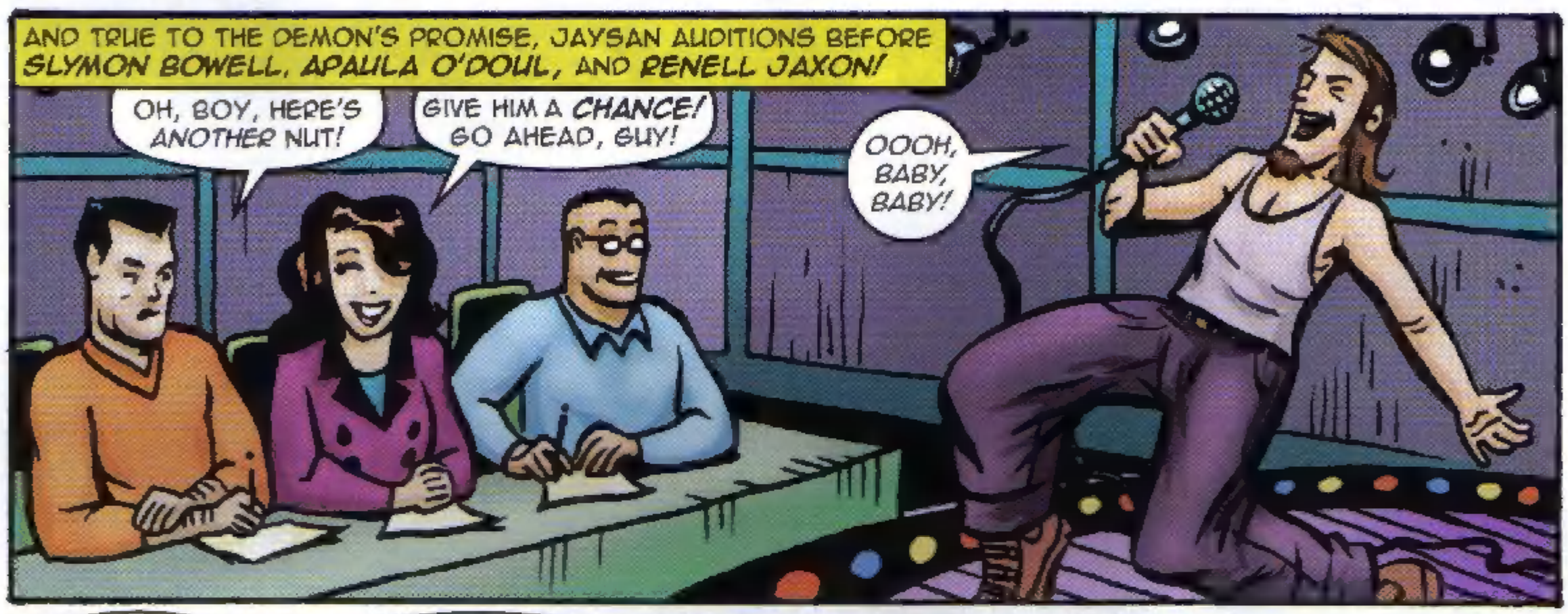
HUH? IS THAT IT? WHERE'S THE DEMON?

DOWN HERE, YOU DOPE!
HEY!

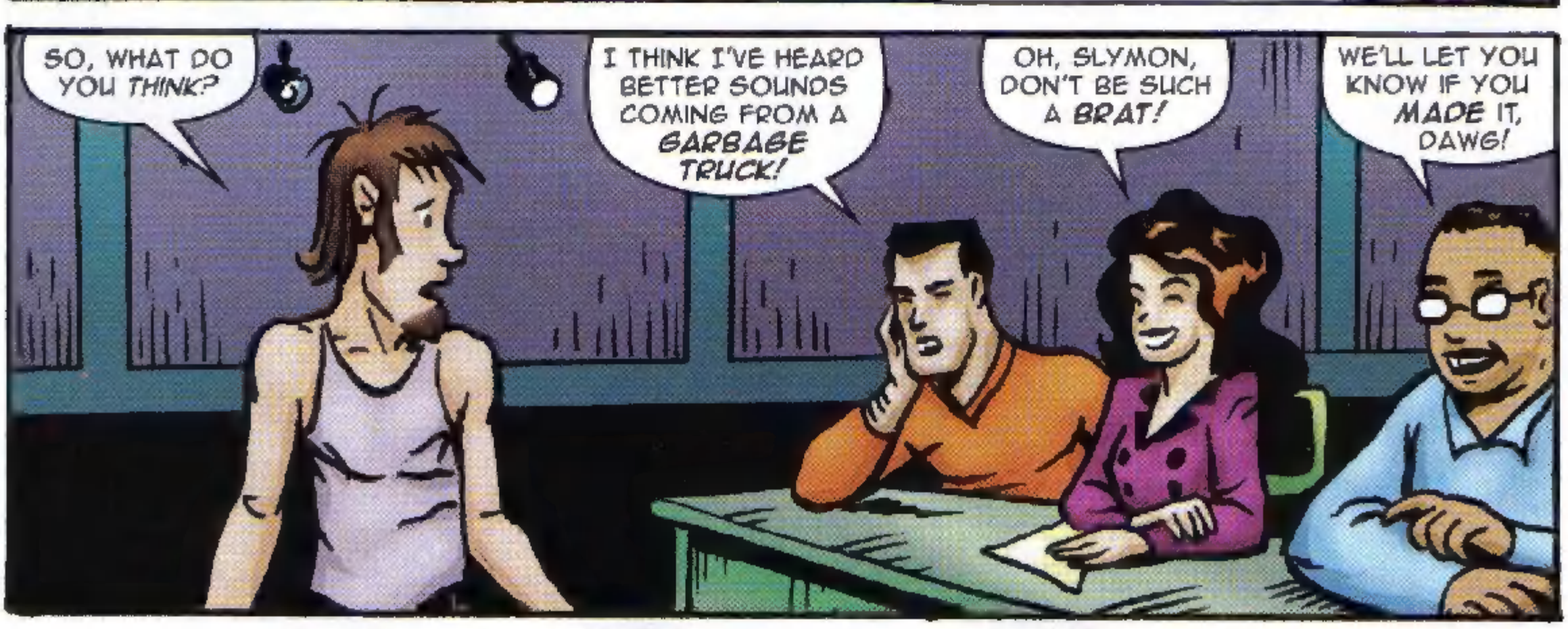
YOU'RE A DEMON?
WHAT DID YOU EXPECT WITH SUCH A PATHETIC SACRIFICE? NOW, WHY DID YOU SUMMON ME?

I WANT TO WIN POPSTAR IDOL!
PFFT! THAT'LL TAKE A LARGER PAYMENT THAN THE LIFE OF A SMALL RODENT! MAKE A MORE MODEST WISH AND MAYBE I'LL GRANT IT!

CAN YOU MAKE SURE I GET THE CHANCE TO AUDITION AT LEAST?
IT IS DONE!
FWOOSH!


AND TRUE TO THE DEMON'S PROMISE, JAYSAN AUDITIONS BEFORE SLYMON BOWELL, APALILA O'DOUL, AND RENELL JAXON!
OH, BOY, HERE'S ANOTHER NUT!
GIVE HIM A CHANCE! GO AHEAD, GUY!
OOOH, BABY, BABY!

PATHETIC!
HE'S KINDA CUTE!
I AM SO INTO YOU, MY BABY LOVE, OOH YEAH!
AND IT ALWAYS HELPS TO HAVE A KINDA GOOFY ACT ON THE SHOW, DAWG!


SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I THINK I'VE HEARD BETTER SOUNDS COMING FROM A GARBAGE TRUCK!
OH, SLYMON, DON'T BE SUCH A BRAT!
WE'LL LET YOU KNOW IF YOU MADE IT, DAWG!

THAT DIDN'T GO SO WELL! IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT POMPOUS BRIT, SLYMON BOWELL, I WOULD BE A SHOE-IN!
MAYBE THEY WILL ACCEPT ME...AND I HAVE A WAY TO MAKE SURE THEY WILL IF I HAVE TO!

BUT WHEN THE UPSET SINGER RETURNS TO HIS APARTMENT...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
CLEANING UP THIS HORRID MESS YOU MADE! WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, PAINTING THIS ON MY FLOOR?

I DID MY AUDITION FOR POPSTAR IDOL TODAY! I'M SURE I'M GONNA WIN!
OH, GET REAL, JAYSAN! YOU'RE NO SINGER! YOU HAVE TO THINK ABOUT GETTING SOME REAL WORK!

YOU'VE NEVER BELIEVED IN ME! I CAN DO IT! I'VE GOT THE TALENT!
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! YOU DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES! LET GO OF ME!

PULLING FREE FROM JAYSAN, GLORIA SLIPS ON SOME SOAPY WATER AND...
OHHH!
CRACK!
OH, NO! GLORIA! ARE YOU OKAY?
THERE IS NO RESPONSE AS HER LIFELESS BODY STARTS TO IGNITE ON TOP THE DEMONIC SYMBOLS!
GLORIA!
A BIGGER DEMON!
YOU SUMMONED ME? WHAT IS YOUR WISH?

I-I DIDN'T WANT HER TO DIE!
IS IT YOUR DESIRE TO BRING HER BACK TO LIFE?

ER, UH...NO! I WANT TO WIN ON THE POPSTAR SHOW!

IT WOULD TAKE A STILL GREATER SACRIFICE TO REALIZE YOUR DESIRE!

CAN YOU MAKE SURE I GET ACCEPTED ON THE SHOW?
IT IS DONE! AND MAY I MAKE A SUGGESTION? DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT HAIR!

I'M SORRY GLORIA'S GONE, BUT SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE IN ME! NOW MY TALENT WILL CARRY ME TO THE TOP...AND I'LL HAVE NO SHORTAGE OF GIRLFRIENDS!

AND SO BEGINS JAYSAN'S SEEMINGLY INEXPLICABLE RISE ON THE SHOW, DESPITE HIS QUESTIONABLE TALENT, HE GETS A CADRE OF SCREAMING FANS... SIMPLY BECAUSE HE IS ON TV!
OH, BABY, CAN'T LI-I-I-VE WITHOUT YOU--!
JAYSAN! JAYSAN!
EEEEEEEE!

THE MEDIA CLIMBS ON THE BANDWAGON, PUSHING THE UNLIKELY IDOL IN NEWSPAPERS AND ON TV...
AYSAN
JAYSAN WINS: POPS FAVORITE
JAYSAN WITH C
WEIRD WINS
HAIR APPARENT

EVEN THE CELEBRITY JUDGES ARE IMPRESSED... MOST OF THEM!
Y'GOTTA ADMIT, HE GETS THE CROWD GOING!
AND HE KEEPS GETTING A LOT OF PHONE VOTES FROM THE AUDIENCE!
YECCH! WHAT A NOISE! HIS CONTINUED SUCCESS IS SURELY THE WORK OF THE DARK ARTS!
WE'LL SEE HOW THE VOTING GOES TONIGHT. AMERICA CAN'T BE SO STUPID AS TO MAKE HIM THE POPSTAR IDOL!

THE VOTES ARE ALL IN! THE JUDGES AND THE PEOPLE HAVE DECIDED-- CEDRIC, YOU'RE SAFE!

"--AND FOR THE *FIRST* TIME FACING ELIMINATION...*JAYSAN!*"

WHAT?!

IT *CAN'T* BE! I CAN'T *LOSE!* I JUST *CAN'T!*

IF ONLY I HAD TIME TO MAKE ANOTHER *SACRIFICE!* I CAN'T BE DEFEATED NOW WHEN I'M SO *CLOSE!*

CEDRIC, YOU'RE *SAFE!* NOW IT'S DOWN TO *BERTHA* AND *JAYSAN!* WHO WILL BE GOING HOME TONIGHT?

JAYSAN...YOU... YOU ARE *COMING BACK* NEXT WEEK!

JAYSAN!!!

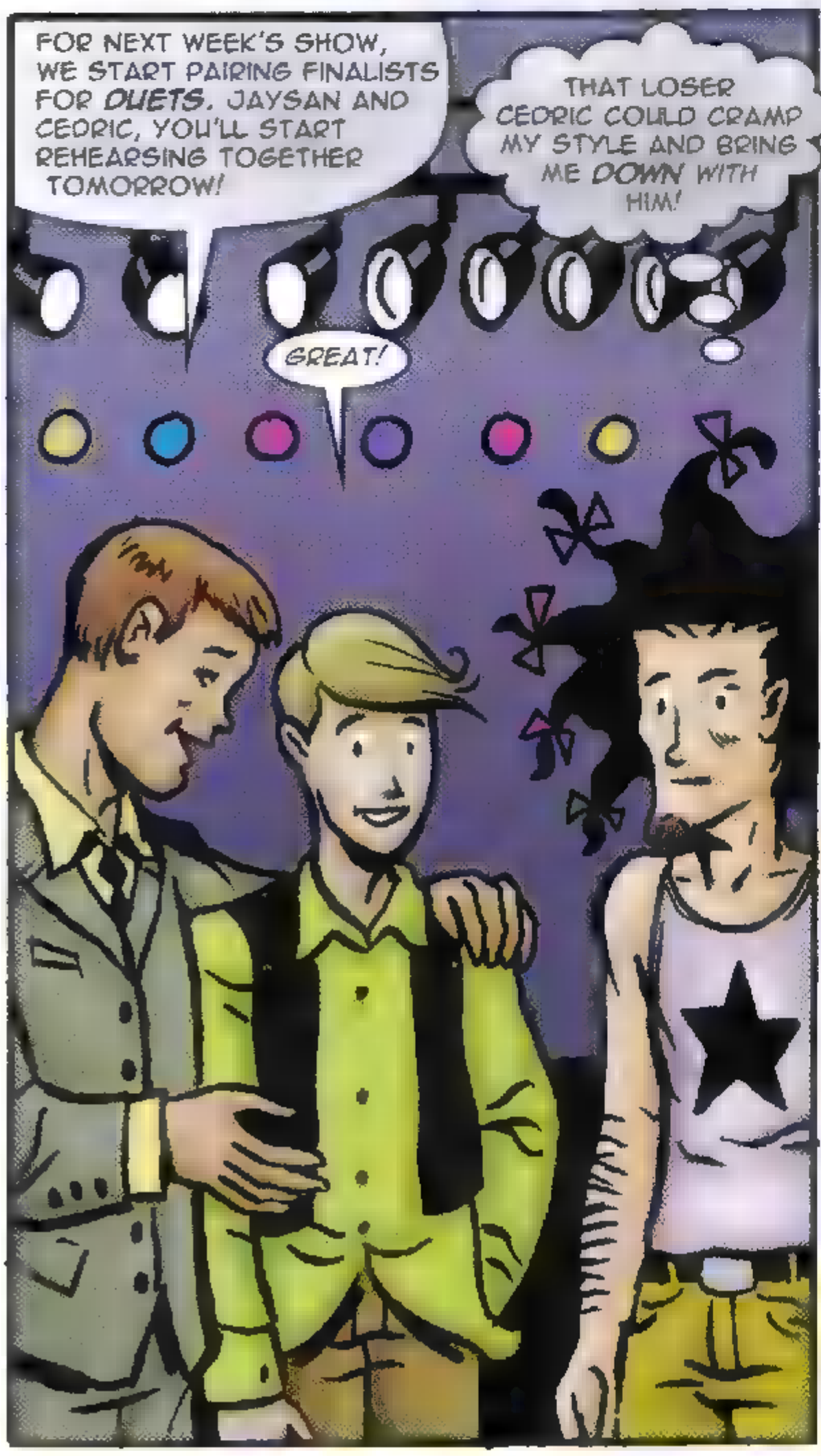
JAYSAN ROCKS!

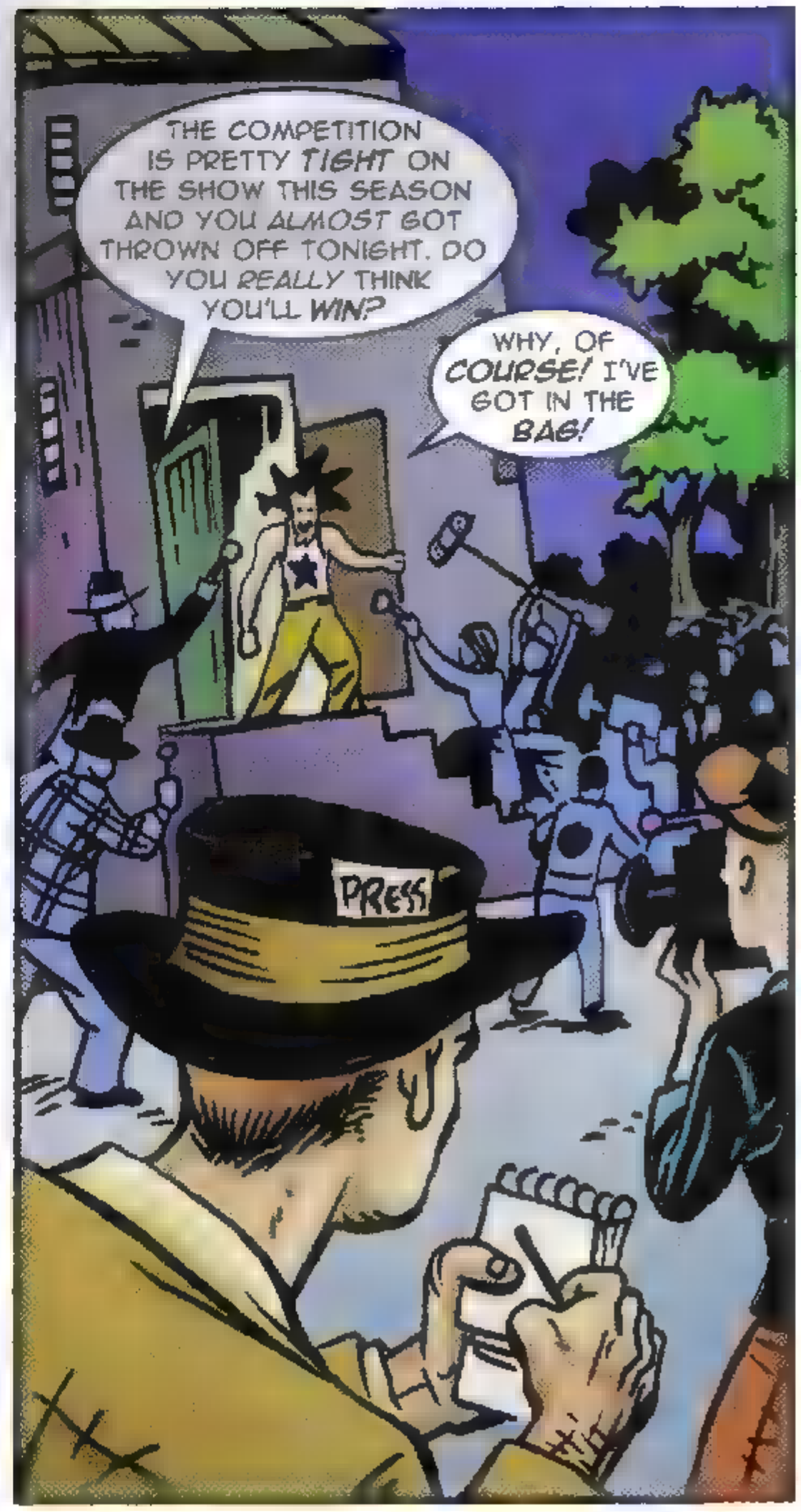
MAKE MINE JAYSAN

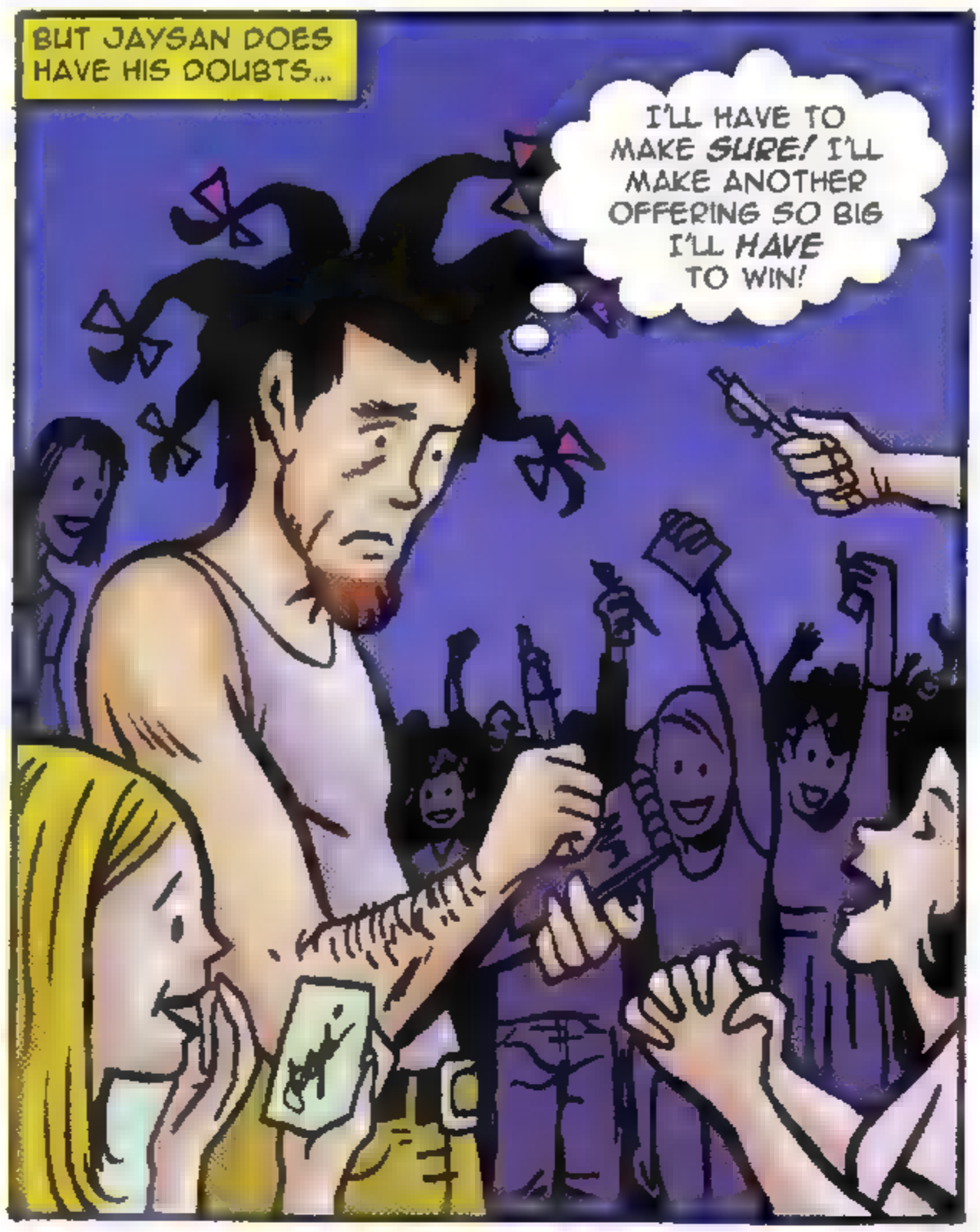
WE ♥ JAYSAN!

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT, SLYMON?
UNBELIEVABLE! I'VE HEARD MORE MUSICAL-SOUNDING CAR ACCIDENTS!

IF THAT SLYMON BOWELL DIDN'T SLAG ME EACH WEEK, I'D HAVE MORE VOTES! HE'S OUT TO GET ME!


FOR NEXT WEEK'S SHOW, WE START PAIRING FINALISTS FOR DUETS. JAYSAN AND CEDRIC, YOU'LL START REHEARSING TOGETHER TOMORROW!
THAT LOSER CEDRIC COULD CRAMP MY STYLE AND BRING ME DOWN WITH HIM!
GREAT!


THE COMPETITION IS PRETTY TIGHT ON THE SHOW THIS SEASON AND YOU ALMOST GOT THROWN OFF TONIGHT. DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU'LL WIN?
WHY, OF COURSE! I'VE GOT IN THE BAG!
PRESS


BUT JAYSAN DOES HAVE HIS DOUBTS...
I'LL HAVE TO MAKE SURE! I'LL MAKE ANOTHER OFFERING SO BIG I'LL HAVE TO WIN!

THE NEXT DAY AT REHEARSAL...
EVEN THOUGH IT'S EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF, GOOD LUCK, JAYSAN! I--WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ER, I'M AN ARTIST IN MY SPARE TIME AND THIS IS A GOOD LUCK SYMBOL I LIKE TO DRAW!

HEY, WHATEVER! IT'S KINDA ODD, BUT IF IT WORKS FOR YOU--

WHOMP!
ACCGK!

I KILLED HIM! AND THOSE FLAMES WILL CONSUME ALL EVIDENCE OF WHAT I DID!

WOW! THIS IS THE BIGGEST DEMON YET! HE'S SURE TO GRANT ME MY ULTIMATE WISH!

I WANT TO WIN POPSTAR IDOL!!!

NOT SO FAST!

FWOOOOOSH

THOUGH THIS MAY BE YOUR GREATEST OFFERING YET, IT IS STILL NOT ENOUGH! ALL I CAN GUARANTEE IS THAT YOU WILL BECOME A FINALIST. THE REST IS UP TO YOU!

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? MURDER THE WHOLE AUDIENCE?

KNOCK KNOCK

SORRY TO INTERRUPT... ISN'T CEDRIC HERE WITH YOU? AND WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

UM, NO, I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM...AND I'M AFRAID I HAVE A LITTLE GAS PROBLEM WHEN I'M NERVOUS!

O-O-KAY! WELL, IF CEDRIC DOESN'T SHOW UP SOON, HE'S *OUT* OF THE COMPETITION!
THAT'S A *SAFE BET!*

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING POPSTAR CONTESTANT MAKES HEADLINES WHICH FUELS JAYSAN'S SUCCESS AS THE SHOW MUST GO ON.
MYSTERY OF MISSING
CAN J BE #

BACKSTAGE ON THE NEXT TO LAST SHOW...
DO YOU THINK THEY'LL *EVER* FIND CEDRIC? WHAT COULD'VE *HAPPENED?*
OH, HE PROBABLY COULDN'T TAKE THE HEAT AND *FLAKED OUT!*

AFTER TONIGHT, ONLY *TWO* OF YOU WILL BE LEFT! GOOD LUCK TO YOU *ALL!*
LUCK IS FOR LESSER MEN! I DON'T *NEED* IT!

I'M GOING TO BE A FINALIST BUT TO MAKE SURE I WIN, I'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHO WOULD MAKE THE GREATEST SACRIFICE POSSIBLE TO MAKE MY DREAM COME TRUE!

SURE ENOUGH, WHEN THE LAST TWO FINALISTS ARE ANNOUNCED, ONE OF THEM IS...
--JAYSAN!
YAYY!! WHOO-HOO!! JAYSAN!!
THE AUDIENCE LOVES ME!

MAYBE I CAN WIN ON MY OWN WITHOUT ANY MORE DEMONIC HELP!

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE FINALISTS, SLYMON?
AN UTTER TRAVESTY! WE'VE SEEN SOME REAL TALENT GET VOTED OFF IN FAVOR OF THAT CATERWAULING BANSHEE, JAYSAN! IF HE WINS, IT'LL BE A NEW LOW FOR MUSICAL STANDARDS!
I WOULD WIN IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT BOWELL ALWAYS BAD-MOUTHING ME! HE JUST VOTED HIMSELF AS TOP FINALIST FOR THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE THAT WILL ASSURE MY VICTORY!

ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE FINAL SHOW, JAYSAN ARRANGES A MEETING WITH SLYMON...
THANKS FOR MEETING WITH ME. I KNOW YOU HAVEN'T MUCH BELIEF IN MY SINGING ABILITY...
THAT'S AN UNDERSTATE-MENT!

NEVER HAVE I SEEN SOMEONE WITH SUCH AN ABYSMAL LACK OF TALENT GO SO FAR! THE VOTERS MUST BE MAD TO HAVE TAKEN YOU TO THIS LEVEL!

ACTUALLY I'VE HAD A LITTLE HELP...
I KNEW IT! SOME COMPUTER PROGRAM TO MANIPULATE THE PHONE SCORES? SAY, WHAT'S THIS THING SCRAWLED ON THE FLOOR?

THE THING THAT'S BEEN HELPING ME!
WHAT--?!

YOUR DEATH WILL SUMMON THE MOST POWERFUL DEMON YET! AND WITH YOU OUT OF THE WAY, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN LOSE POPSTAR IDOL!

HA HA HA HA HA HA
HUH? YOU'RE STILL ALIVE? HOW?!!

BEFORE JAYSAN'S HORRIFIED EYES, SLYMON BEGINS TO TRANSFORM...

FOOLISH BOY! HOW DO YOU THINK A TWIT LIKE ME COULD BECOME SUCH A POWERFUL FIGURE IN WORLD MEDIA?!

NO! YOU... YOU--
YES! I AM THE ULTIMATE DEMON! I HAVE USED MY POSITION OF PRODUCING TALENT SHOWS TO COLLECT NUMEROUS LOST SOULS!

AND CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE WON THE COMPETITION--
AHHHH!

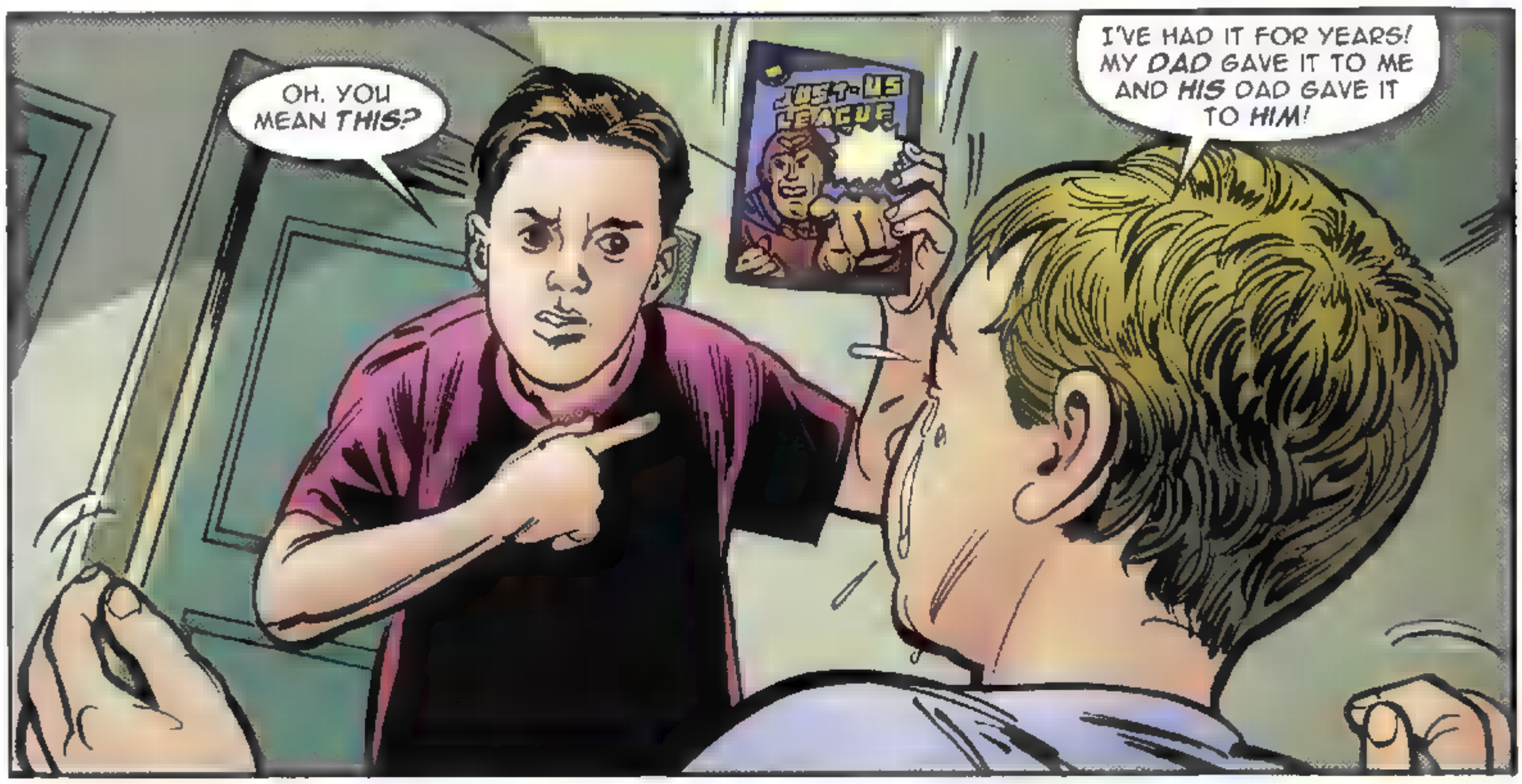
...YOU ARE NOW POPSTAR IDOL OF HELL WHERE YOU WILL PERFORM YOUR SHRIEKING TO AN ADORING AUDIENCE... FOR ALL ETERNITY!!!
NO! NOOOOO!
THE END

HOO-HAH! FINALLY A "REALITY" TV SHOW THAT'S TRUE TO LIFE, AS SLYMON WAS ABLE TO DEMON-STRATE!
LOOK--I DUG UP ONE OF THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S RARE COMICS-- IT'S ENTOMBED IN PLASTIC, SO IT MUST BE VALUABLE!
JUST TOSS IT IN WITH THE REST OF THE STUFF WE'RE TAKING OFF C-K'S HANDS!

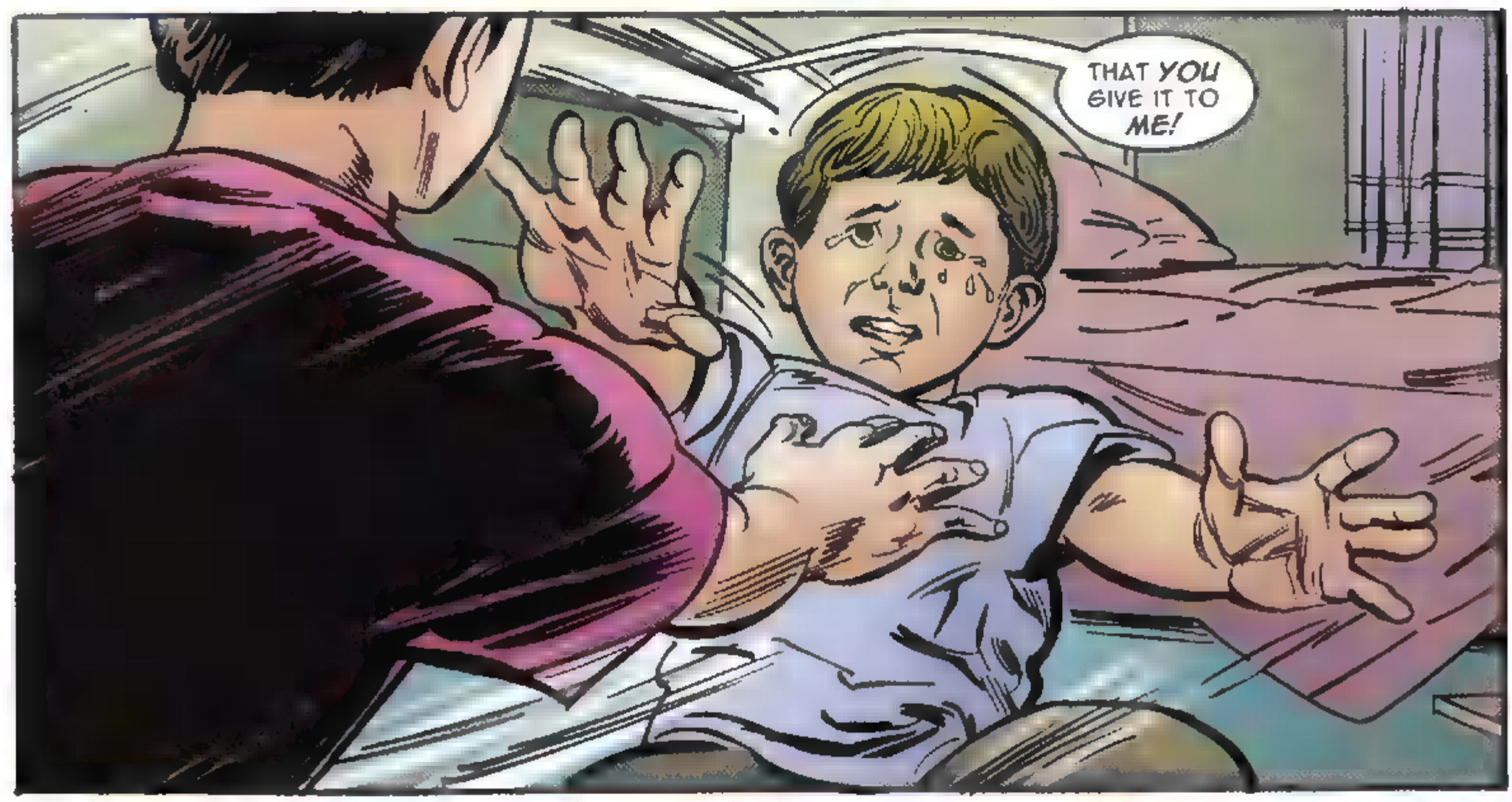
JUST MAKES TO NO SENSE TO HAVE SO MUCH AWESOME SWAG IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO APPRECIATE IT!
AGREED! LET'S GO TO YOUR VAULT AND APPRECIATE!

GOOD LORD! I THOUGHT THEY'D NEVER LEAVE! HI, BOILS AND GHOULS, LET ME TELL YOU THE TERRIFYING TRUTH BEHIND THAT COMICBOOK THOSE TWO GHOULUNATICS RIPPED-OFF WHILE I WAS LURKING IN MY FAVORITE SCREAM-ROOM!
JUST LIKE WHAT YOU CALL AN OVER-PRICED COMICBOOK DE-GRADED AND IMPRISONED IN PLASTIC, I CALL THIS TERROR-TALE...
SLABBED!

NO! PLEASE! PLEASE! I'M BEGGING YOU!
DERRICK! GIVE IT BACK! IT'S MY FAVORITE, MOST VALUABLE COMIC EVER!
JUST-U-LEAGUE
BEWARE EVIL-DOER! WE'RE COMING FOR YOU! THEN IT'LL BE-- JUST US!
WHAT COMIC? I DON'T SEE ANY COMIC! YOU MUST BE DREAMING!


OH, YOU MEAN THIS?
JUST-US LEAGUE
I'VE HAD IT FOR YEARS! MY DAD GAVE IT TO ME AND HIS DAD GAVE IT TO HIM!

YEAH? AND SINCE THEY'RE BOTH DEAD AND YOUR MOM MARRIED MY DAD, I GUESS IT'S ONLY FAIR...


THAT YOU GIVE IT TO ME!

'SIDES, DON'T YOU KNOW THESE THINGS'LL *ROT* YOUR MIND?

OMF!

WOULDN'T WANT TO GROW UP LIKE *ME*...

...WOULD YOU?

WHUD!

RICO? Y-Y-YOU'RE *HERE* ALREADY?

YEAH.

IS MY *MONEY* HERE, TOO?

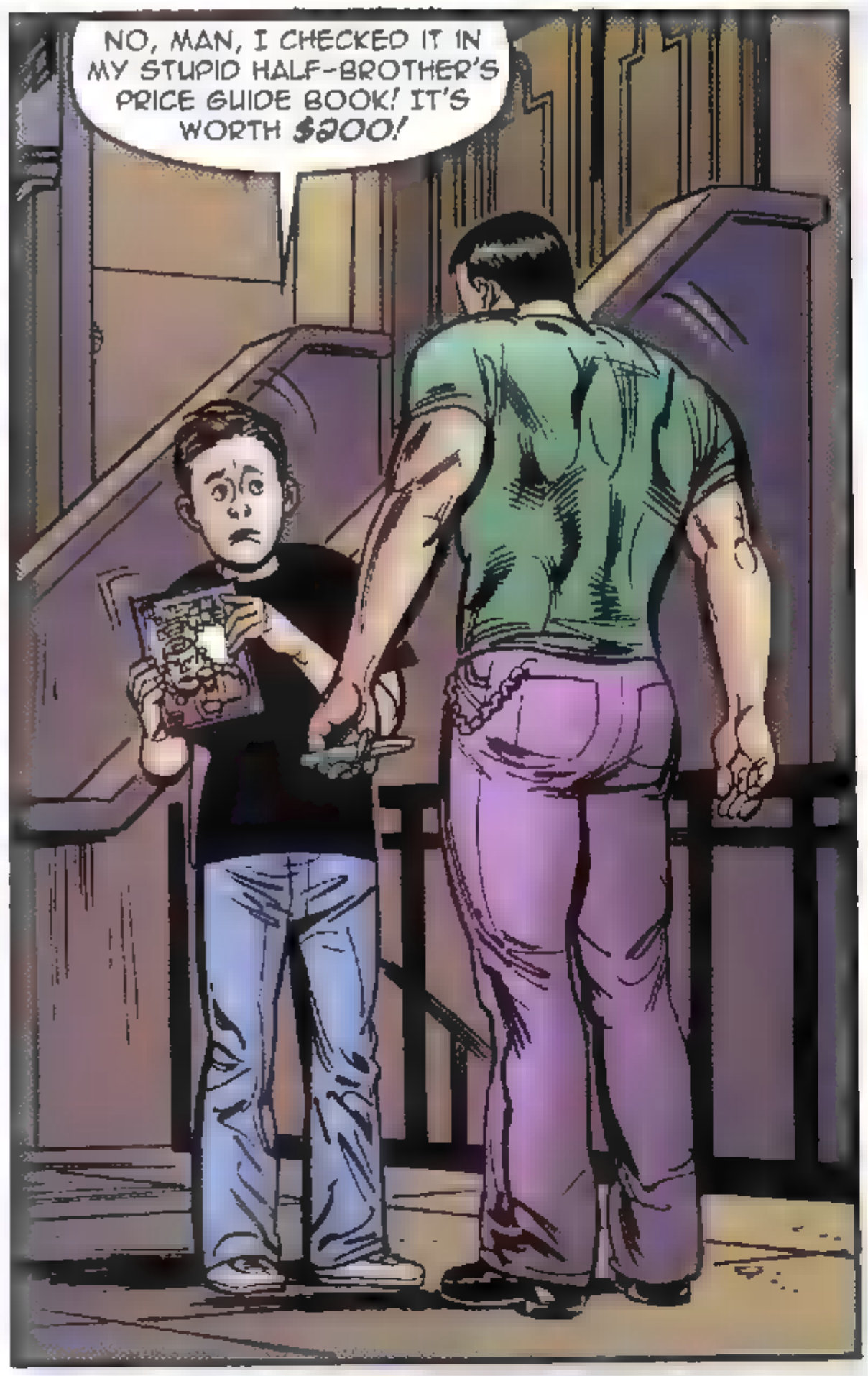
N-N-NOT YET, BUT I'M ON MY WAY TO S-S-SELL *THIS!*

JUST US LEAGUE #1, EH? NICE.

BUT THAT THING LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN *READ* A LOT.

AIN'T WORTH SO MUCH IF IT'S BEEN *READ* A LOT. SOMETHING COMES *OFF* THE PRICE.

WHICH MEANS I MAY HAVE TO TAKE SOMETHING OFF *YOU.*


NO, MAN, I CHECKED IT IN MY STUPID HALF-BROTHER'S PRICE GUIDE BOOK! IT'S WORTH $200!

BETTER BE! I'LL GIVE YOU TWO HOURS!
PHEW!

THAT CRAZY OLD COMIC DEALER I FOUND ON THE WEB IS ACROSS TOWN!
I'D BETTER BOOK!

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

COME ON! COME ON! I HAVEN'T GOT ALL NIGHT!

CREAAAAKKKK

WELCOME-- TO THE HALLOWED HALLS OF *JUSTICE!*

UH--ISN'T THIS DAVE'S COMICS?

THAT, TOO.

LIKE THE WORLD ITSELF, COMICBOOKS EMBODY THE PRIMAL, TITANIC FORCES OF GOOD AND EVIL!
UNLIKE THE WORLD, IN COMICS, JUSTICE CAN RULE!

MAN, THE OLD DUDE IS WACK! HE TALKS LIKE A COMIC HIMSELF!
THAT'S WHY I'VE DEVOTED MY LIFE TO GATHERING THESE FINE HEROES UNDER ONE ROOF!
I LIVE DEATH
EXTREME PUNISHMENT

I LIKE TO THINK THEIR COLLECTED ENERGY INFORMS THE VERY BRICKS WITH AN UNERRING SENSE OF JUSTICE!
UH...YEAH. YOU PAY CASH, RIGHT?

YEP! DON'T BELIEVE IN CHECKS!

WHOA, WHAT'S *THAT?*

IT'S SOMETHING ***NEW***. EVERY COMIC HERE IS DEVOTED TO ***HEROES***, EXCEPT THIS!

YOU ***LIKE*** IT, I CAN TELL!

SO I'LL ***SHOW*** YOU!

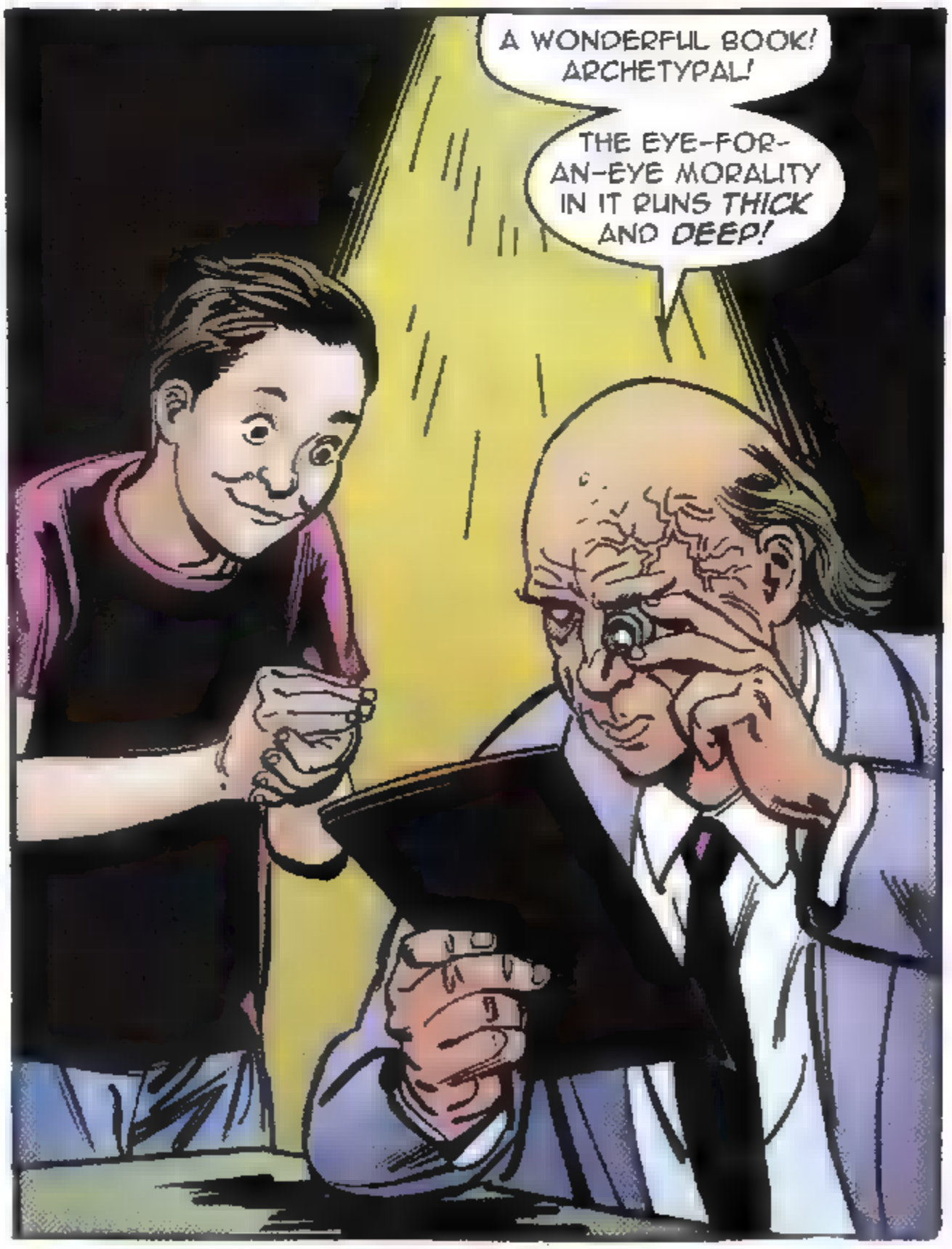
WHIRRRR

WOW! WHAT'S IT *WORTH?*

THE MOST VALUABLE COMIC IN EXISTENCE! *PURE EVIL #1!*

WORTH? YOU CAN'T MEASURE THESE THINGS IN *DOLLARS!*

NOW LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT WHAT *YOU'VE* BROUGHT!



IT'S THE *CONDITION!* I'M SORRY, IT'S BEEN READ TOO *OFTEN!*

NOOO! I CAN'T GO BACK TO RICO WITH FIVE BUCKS! WHAT AM I GONNA *DO?*

MUCH OF THE ENERGY HAS BEEN *DRAINED!*

IT'S PRACTICALLY *USELESS* TO ME!

YEAH? JUST LIKE *YOU'RE* USELESS TO *ME!*

WHUD! WHUD!

HE'S *DEAD*... GOTTA BE...

GOTTA FIND HIS *CASH* BOX... STEAL A BUNCH OF *COMICS*...

OR...JUST TAKE THE MOST VALUABLE COMIC IN THE *WORLD!*

finished school?

PURE EVIL

WHUD! WHUD! WHUD!

UNGH! WHAT'S THIS MADE OF? *ADAMANTIUM?*

GOOD THING YOU SHOWED ME HOW TO OPEN IT, HUH?

YOUR SECURITY BOX WON'T *CARE* IF YOUR FINGERPRINT'S ALIVE OR DEAD!

IN FACT, I BET *NOBODY* CARES IF YOU'RE ALIVE OR DEAD!

ATAI

SPACE COMMAND

GUILTY!

WILD WEST

YOUR FAMILY'D PROBABLY *THANK* ME FOR KILLING YOU!

NOW THEY CAN SELL THE REST OF THESE STUPID BOOKS AND *RETIRE,* LIKE YOU SAID!

PURE EVIL

BUT *THIS* ONE'S MINE!

Never in math high school?

WHUD!

EH? WHAT'S *THAT?*

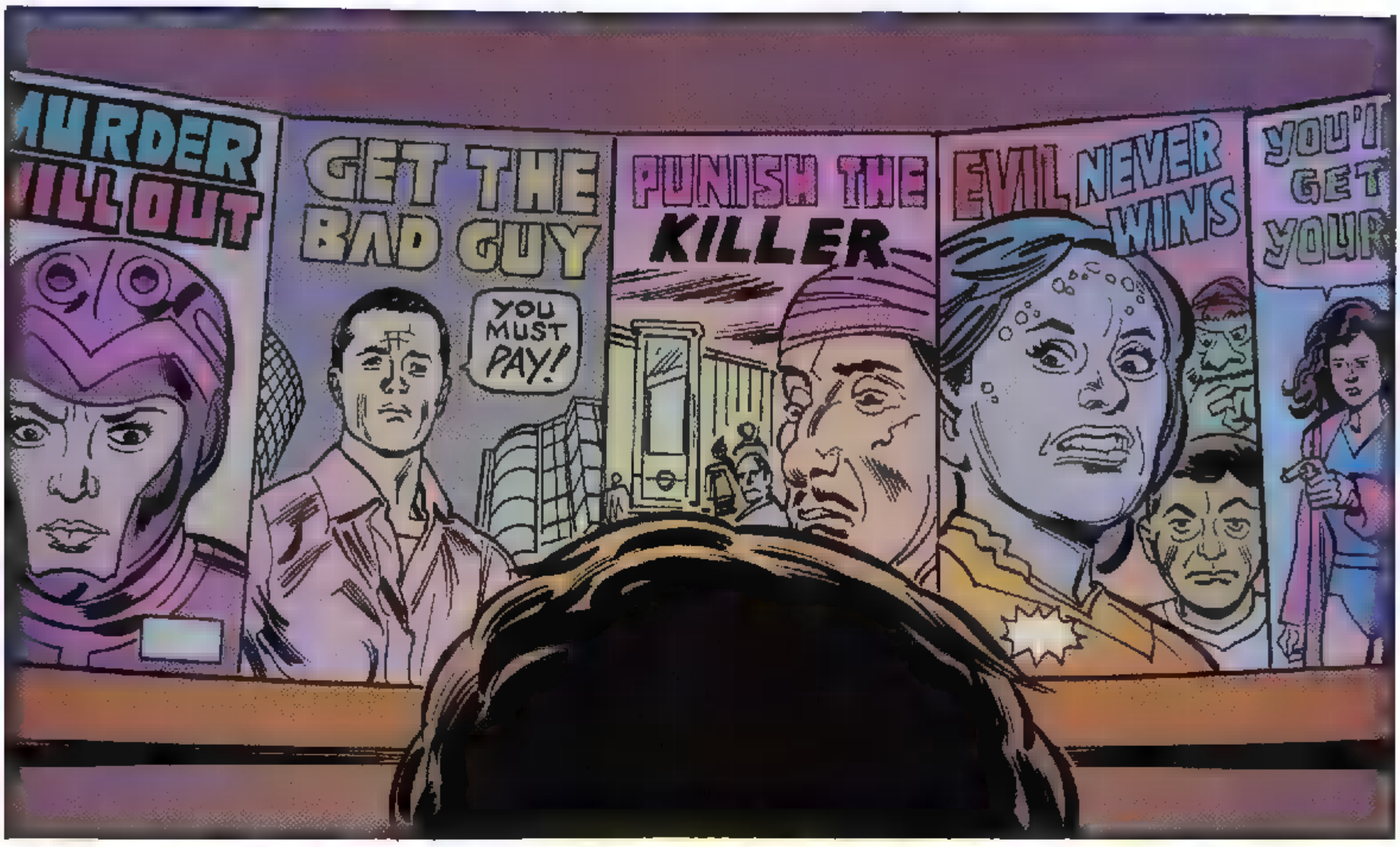
SOO

SCHH

AND WHY'S IT SO FREAKIN' COLD ALL OF A SUDDEN?

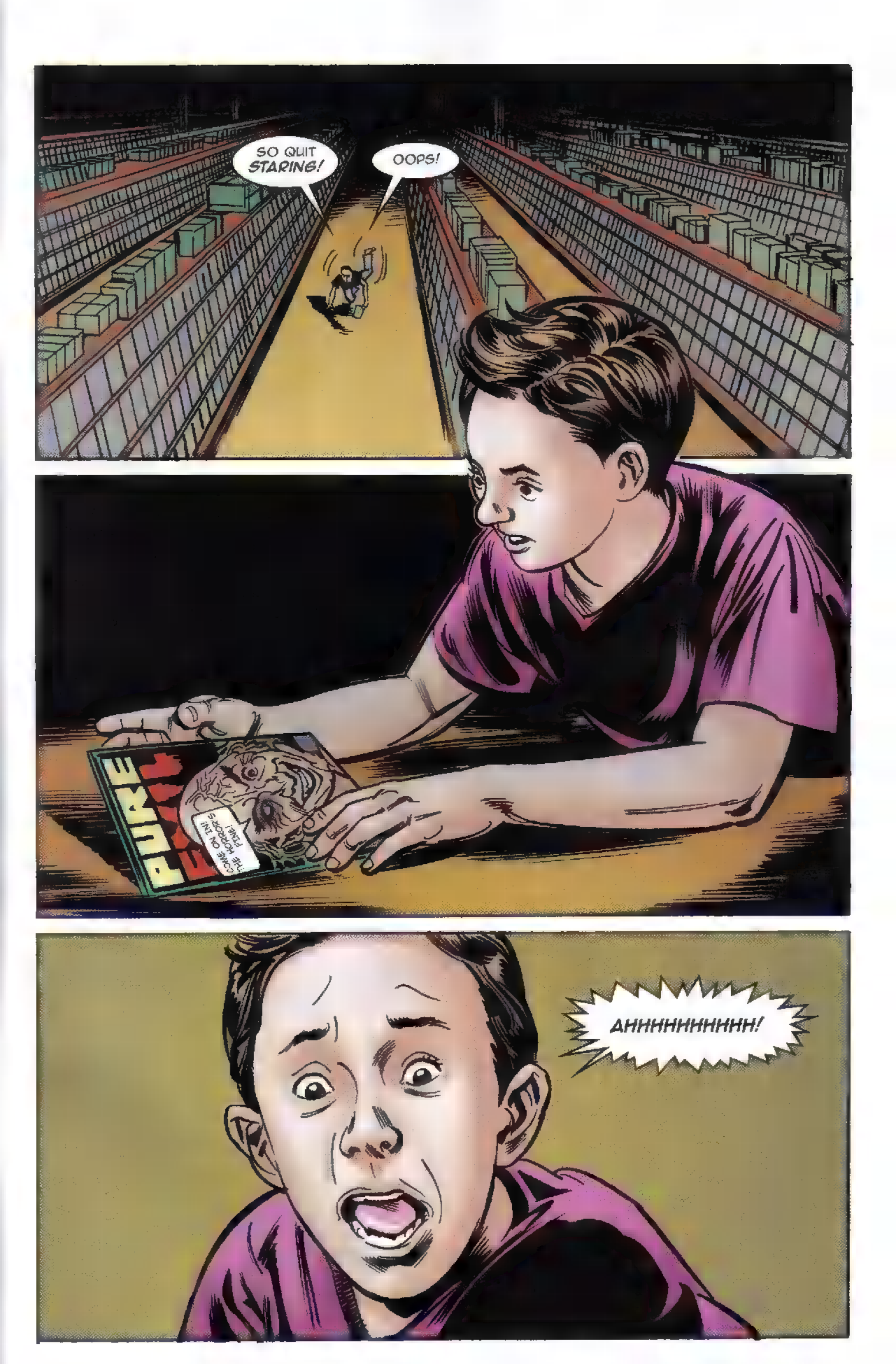
WHO CARES? ONCE I SELL THIS, I'LL BE RICH!
I CAN EVEN HIRE SOME GOON TO GET THAT FREAK RICO OFF MY BACK!
PURE EVIL

UH...WASN'T THIS THE EXIT?
Never finished high school?


MURDER WILL OUT
GET THE BAD GUY
YOU MUST PAY!
PUNISH THE KILLER
EVIL NEVER WINS
YOU'LL GET YOUR

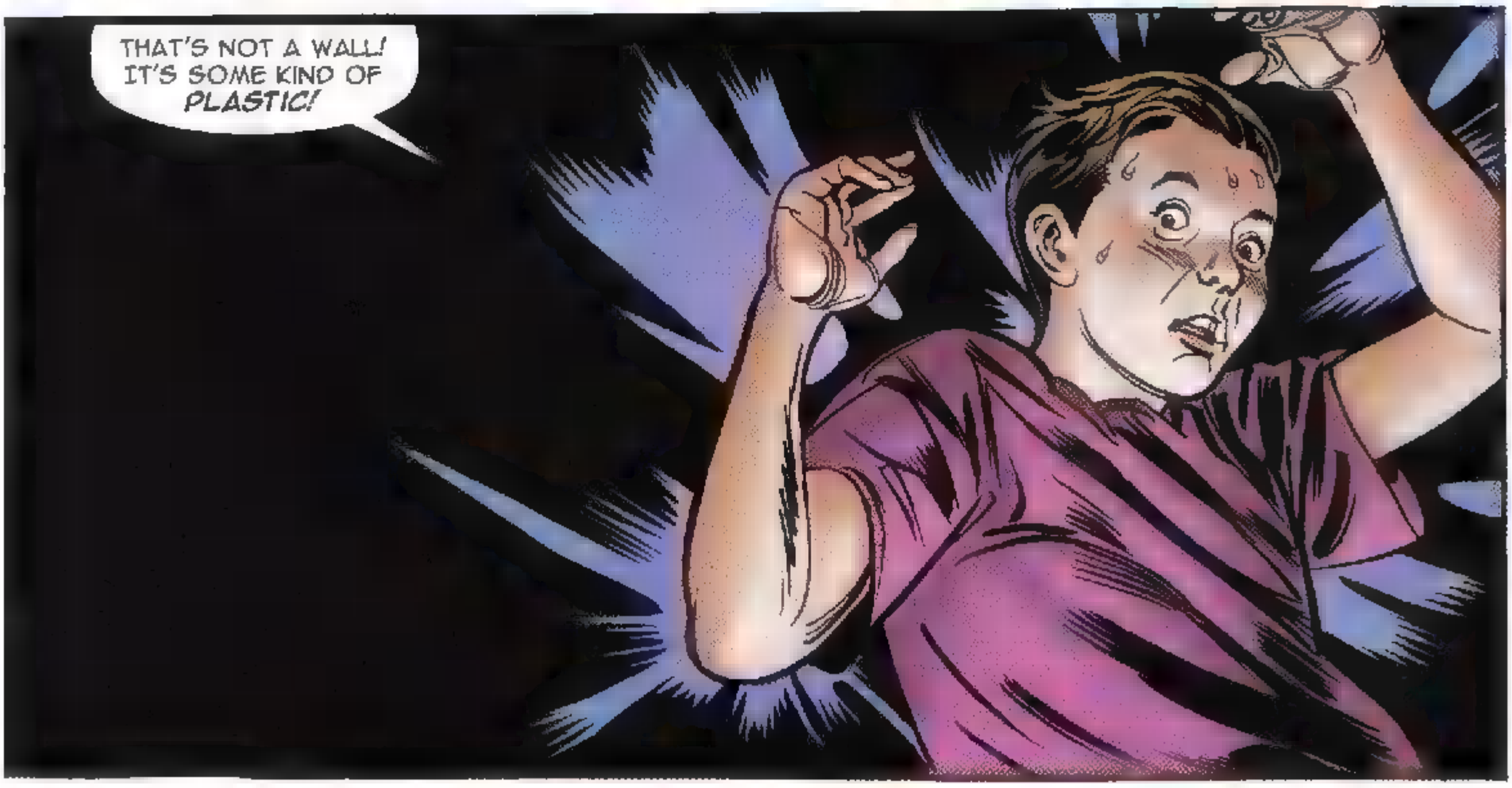
HA!
YOU COMICS TRYING TO MAKE ME FEEL GUILTY OR SOMETHING?
Never finished high school?

WELL, IT WON'T WORK!


SO QUIT STARING!
OOPS!
PUKE
COME ON IN! THE HORROR'S FINE!
AHHHHHHHHHH!

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! THAT WAS THE OLD MAN'S FACE!

IT'S SOME KIND OF TRICK!


THAT'S NOT A WALL! IT'S SOME KIND OF *PLASTIC!*

I MUST BE DREAMING!
ANY SECOND NOW, I'M GOING TO WAKE UP! I KNOW IT!
SOMEONE WAKE ME UP!

AFTER A LIFETIME OF COLLECTING HEROES, I FINALLY FIGURED IT WAS TIME TO COLLECT A FEW VILLAINS TO BALANCE THINGS!
I'D NO IDEA HOW EASY IT WOULD BE!
HA-HA-HA-HA!
PURE EVIL
NO! PLEASE! PLEASE! I'M BEGGING YOU!
THE END

YOU KNOW, KIDDIES, IT'S *JUVENILE DELINQUENTS* SUCH AS *DERRICK* THAT GIVE COMICS A REALLY *BAD NAME!*
OH, NO! WHAT'S THIS?!
HELL
THOSE IDIOTS, THE OLD WITCH AND THE VAULT-KEEPER, *TRADED* THE *MOST VALUABLE* COMIC IN THE WORLD, TO GET INTO ANOTHER COMIC!
THEY'RE *DOWNGRADING* THAT COMIC TO *TORE-MINT CONDITION!*
IF SHE DROPS THAT CAR, THEY'LL HAVE TO RE-TITLE THE BOOK *TRACTION COMICS!* OH, THE HORROR-- *THE HORROR!*
WITH US ON THE COVER WE SHOULD DRIVE PRICES *UP, UP* AND *AWAY!*
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN TO THE *FORTRESS OF ATTITUDE!*
UNLESS WE JUST DESTROYED THE COMICS INDUSTRY *AGAIN*—DON'T MISS THE NEXT SHOCK-FILLED, SUPER-SCAREFYING, *NIGHTMARE-INSPIRING, CRITIC-BAITING, COLLECTORS ITEM ISSUE* OF *TALES FROM THE CRYPT!*

THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Salutations, you CRAZED CONSUMERS of PUTRID PAPERCUTZ PUBLICATIONS! Time once again for our VICIOUS VERBAL exchanges, regarding our previous phantasmaGORYcal issues!

But first, here's the SHOCKING results of the voting on TALES FROM THE CRYPT #2! "THE TENANT" by Neil Kleid and Steve Mannion just narrowly beat out "THE GARDEN" by Fred Van Lente and Mr. Exes as BEAST, er, best story!

For any of you FOOLISH FRIGHT-FANS who missed our first two TERROR-FILLED issues, I've got good news for you! Our GREEDY publishers have rushed paperback and hardcover books into print collecting most of those stories – they're cleverly called TALES FROM THE CRYPT #1 "Ghouls Gone Wild!" and it's on sale now at BOOkstores everywhere! There's even an all-new TERROR-TALE by Don McGregor and Sho Murase called "RUNWAY ROADKILL!" that's to DIE for!

Subject: Tales from the Crypt!!

It's hard to put into words exactly how happy I was to discover that Papercutz is publishing new TFTC comics (and I am NOT a comic book person). I was always a huge fan of the show, but have never had the good fortune to get my hands on one of the comics. So I settled for pestering the guys at my local comic store (monthly) for anything similar. I managed to find a compilation of "The House of Mystery," but hungered for more. Today, I got it. And I'm stoked. I am dying (ha ha) for the next issue to hit the stands. Thanks so much for resurrecting this awesome comic. I'll be with you guys till the end.

Natalie Vazquez,
Puerto Rico

Just until the end, Natalie? What kind of fickle fan are you?

Subject: New Tales From the Crypt Comics

Hello, I am writing in regards to your new Tales From the Crypt comicbook series. While I appreciate your efforts to revive such a quality publication, I feel that you are going about it incorrectly. You say that you want to keep true to the original, yet you've toned down the content to such a degree, that it doesn't even resemble the horrors from half a century ago. Even though it may seem somewhat tame now, back in the day, Tales From the Crypt was considered very edgy and gory. Had it not been for the atmosphere at the time, it would have been even more visceral. Now, standards are such that you can get away with putting a lot more violent content in comicbooks. By toning down the blood, you are not only abiding by standards that are over half a century old, but you are being less gory than even the original comics were!

I also feel that you do not understand the way Tales from the Crypt "shock" endings work. You acknowledge and utilize shock at the end, but not in the way they were intended. You can't just have some random twist at the end, it has to have a social message to it (a "preachy"). Additionally, the end is typically met with a bloody surprise. This final panel is met with a narrative box that describes the gore-shock in great detail, which gives the reader a better description and creates a sense of uneasiness.

Now, we have to talk about the artwork. I don't expect you to mimic the realistic noir-esque panels of the original to a tee, but at least give it a shot. Your artwork in these new comics doesn't even look remotely realistic. It looks like something out of a damn Nickelodeon cartoon!

In closing, I would like to ask you to please reconsider your new vision of these comics or discontinue them and let the crypt rest peacefully while you concentrate on Nancy Drew or something.

Nathan Wakefield

I feel your pain, Nathan. Unfortunately, I'm stuck with Salicrup as editor!

Subject: TFTC Stories

I've read some of the comments about the art seeming like it's geared more towards young children. And while I somewhat agree with that... the stories are quite good and very mature! I thought that they were very nostalgic of the classic EC Tales From The Crypt comics. In the last issue I really enjoyed "The Garden," it kept me guessing all the way 'til the end. But "The Tenant" was definitely my favorite. It really reminded me of the typical 'Poetic Justice' that was often dealt from the old Tales From The Crypt stories.

CAN'T WAIT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE!!

Jeremy Seth Brauner
Tustin, CA

No need to wait, Jeremy—it's here!

Subject: smiling to you, dear

My dear friend, I am pretty and passionate Ukrainian woman, but I am lonely. My heart dies without love as beautiful flower dies without water. I need to love and to be beloved as rose needs to be watered every day. I need kisses and love as no flower can't live without sunny rays. Waiting for your response.

Josi

Get back to me after you die, Josi! (Got to get a new spam-filter!)

Subject: Thanks for returning the greatest comic of all time.

Hi. I've been a fan of Tales from the Crypt for a long time now. Too young for the initial run, but I read a bunch of the reprints, and watched the show. I just finished the new issue #2, and have to say the new comics completely and totally lived up to the originals, the stories are just as creepy, and the art is just completely fabulous. My only complaint is that there is no possibility to get a subscription to "TFTC." Just leaving my opinion, and asking if you are going to also revive the "Vault of Horror" and "Haunt of Fear"? Thanks,

A Fan

An interesting query, A! What do the rest of you EC Fan-Addicts think?

As for subsCRYPTtions, just send us a check or money order, in US funds only, for $24.00 for a one-year, six-issue subscription to TALES FROM THE CRYPT. Subscriptions begin with the next issue published after we receive your order.

Subject: Keep up the good work!

Hey, I'd just like to say that I LOVE YOUR TALES FROM THE CRYPT COMICS!! I still love the originals, but these are easier for me to read (I'm 13). The artwork is semi-good in "The Garden" though. My favorite comic so far was in issue #2 called "The Tenant." Keep up the terror-ific work! Thank you to the people and my favorite dead-wood star, The Crypt-Keeper! I am in love with the HBO series but most defiantly the comics! I grew up with them since my parents are horror fiend-ittics! Love the comics and love the gore!

Maggot Kisses,
Lesley

Thanks, Lesley! If we haven't rotted your young mind yet, maybe we will next issue!

That's all for now! Don't miss TALES FROM THE CRYPT #4—featuring virtual madness by Neil Kleid and Chris Noeth entitled "Extra Life" and a prescient preachy by Don McGregor, James Romberger and Marguerite Van Cook called "Crystal Clear"!

And keep those emails and letters coming, kiddies! Tell us what you thought of this teratoid, yet transcendental third issue. Send your letters to:

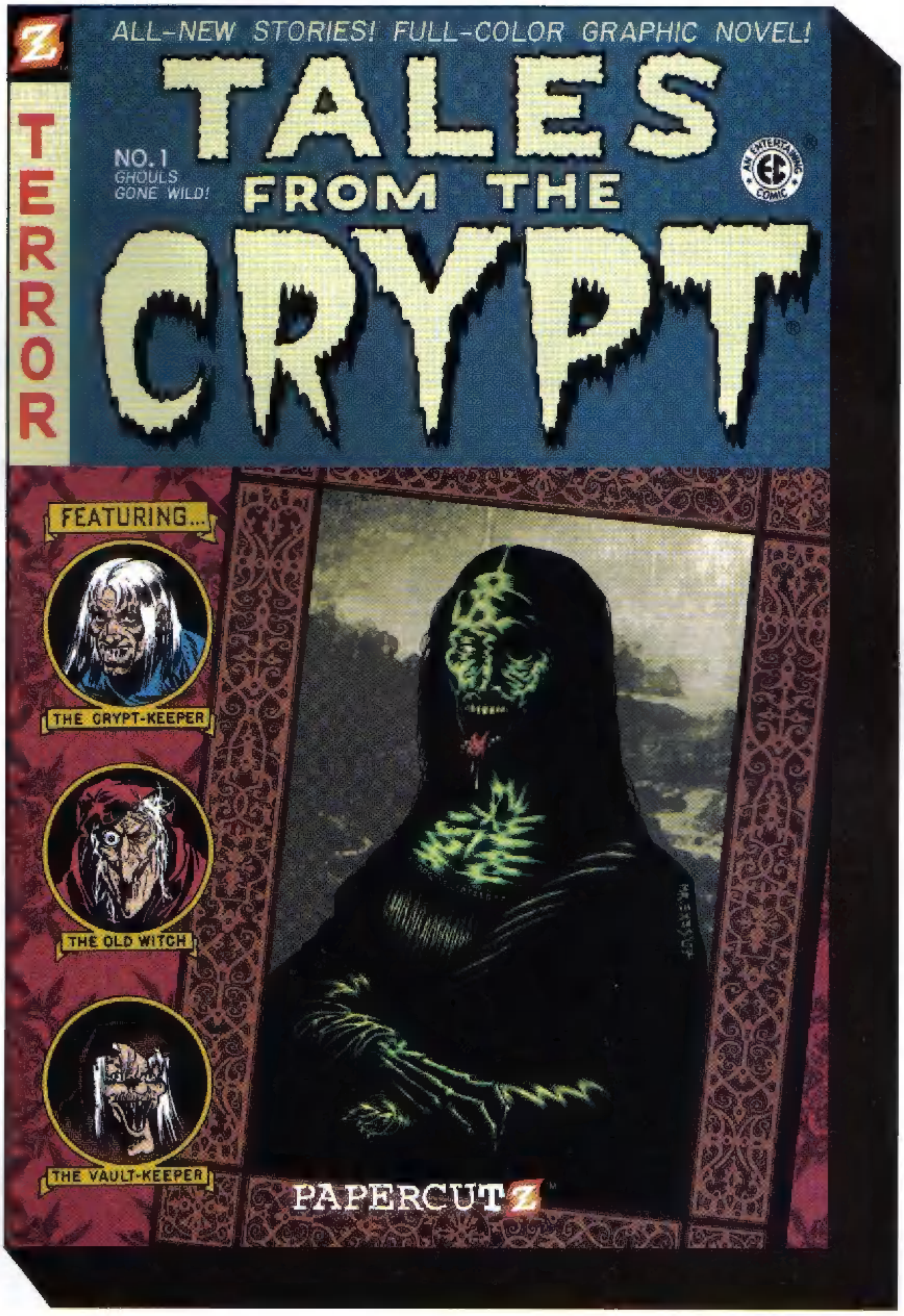
The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your crazed commentaries to our egomaniacal editor at: salicrup@papercutz.com.

E.C. FANS!

YOU'VE WRITTEN!
YOU'VE E-MAILED!
YOU'VE PHONED!
YOU'VE THREATENED US!

SO HERE IT IS! THE COLLECTION
YOU'VE DEMANDED!



PAPERCUTZ

COLLECTING STORIES BY MARC BILGREY & MR. EXES, ROB VOLLMAR & TIM SMITH 3, NEIL KLEID & STEVE MANNION – PLUS AN ALL-NEW STORY BY DON McGREGOR & SHO MURASE!

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